GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2519
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Genuineness of Artefacts in Museums
Singh Shri Ravneet

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any method or guidelines to assess the genuineness of precious artefacts stored in museums across the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to have uniform guidelines to preserve and secure the artefacts in museums?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (IC) CULTURE & TOURISM
AND
MINISTER OF STATE FOR CIVIL AVIATION

(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

(a) There is no specific guidelines for verifying the genuineness of objects/ artifacts. However, for assessing genuineness, there are 2 types of detection methods viz. relative and absolute. Generally, Curators/Historians use a combination of the two.

(b) Relative method is identification on the basis of styles, textures, pigments material, period, chiseling, cutting, legends written on the objects, writings on the objects etc. In the absolute detection method, it is through carbon dating, potassium argon dating, emission technique, N.M.R. techniques, X-ray technique, absorption spectroscopy, Ring Owen techniques are the methods employed for ensuring the identity/genuineness of the artifacts housed in the Museums.

(c) The Govt. has issued instructions to preserve and secure the artifacts in museums by introducing atmospheric control of heat/cold, humidity, dust, etc in galleries, modernizing lighting with heat control, setting up or upgrading conservation laboratories and modeling workshops, circulating periodically displayed materials, accessioning, physical verification, photo-documentation and digitization of objects etc. Govt. of India has also formulated a Comprehensive Security Policy for Museums under the Ministry of Culture and Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) with a view to prepare a holistic policy to meet the requirements of security in museums in the changing scenario and threat perception from various quarters.